DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 440 992 TM 030 788

TITLE	CSRD Evaluation Web Site Feasibility Study.
INSTITUTION	Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning, Aurora, CO.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	2000-03-00
NOTE	16p.; "2000 Deliverable #26."
CONTRACT	RJ96006101
PUB TYPE	Reports - Evaluative (142)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Demonstration Programs; *Evaluation Methods; Feasibility Studies; *Information Dissemination; Online Systems; Program Evaluation; *World Wide Web
IDENTIFIERS	*Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program

ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to examine the need and feasibility of creating a unique evaluation Web site to support the needs of districts and schools recently funded under the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program (CSRD). The federal requirement that CSRD funded schools and districts carry out comprehensive evaluation of their reform programs has created some concerns about the readiness and ability of local personnel to do so without additional support and assistance. The availability and use of more than 20 Web sites that currently provide CSRD information were studied, and information about the need and purpose of such a site was obtained from other regional educational laboratories and the Office of Educational Research and Development. Findings indicate that there already appears to be an ample infrastructure in place for providing educators in CSRD schools and districts with evaluation resources. Adding more links could make this infrastructure an even more effective information dissemination tool. The CRSDweb.net site already in place provides opportunities for educators concerned with evaluation to interact with one another and evaluation experts. It appears that creating a new CSRD evaluation site would not be prudent at this time. (SLD)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

TM

ED 440 992

CSRD EVALUATION WEB SITE FEASIBILITY STUDY

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

TM030788

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

CSRD EVALUATION WEB SITE FEASIBILITY STUDY

REL Contract #RJ96006101
2000 Deliverable #26

Submitted to

Office of Educational Research and Improvement
U.S. Department of Education

Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning
2550 S. Parker Road, Suite 500
Aurora, Colorado 80014
(303) 337-9000

March 2000

© 2000 McREL. All rights reserved.

Published by Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning, a private nonprofit corporation.

This publication is based on work sponsored, wholly or in part, by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), Department of Education, under Contract Number RJ96006101. The content of this publication does not necessarily reflect the views of OERI, the Department of Education, or any other agency of the U.S. Government.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

KEY FINDINGS 1

BACKGROUND 1

EXISTING CSRD-RELATED WEB SITES 1
- Comprehensive Regional Assistance Centers (CCs) 2
- Regional Educational Laboratory Web Sites 2
- Other Sites 5

USE OF CSRD RELATED SITES 6

INPUT FROM STAFF AT OTHER REGIONAL LABORATORIES 6

RECOMMENDATIONS 6

KEY FINDINGS

There already appears to be an ample Internet infrastructure in place for providing educators in CSRD schools and districts with evaluation resources. By adding more links among the existing CSRD sites this infrastructure could be an even more effective dissemination tool. Similarly, the CSRDweb.net site already in place provides ample opportunities for educators concerned with CSR evaluation to interact with one another and with evaluation experts. Thus, based upon this examination of existing sites and discussions among program leaders at the regional laboratories, it appears that creating a new CSRD evaluation site would not be prudent at this time.

BACKGROUND

This study, which examines the need and feasibility of creating a unique evaluation web site to support the needs of districts and schools recently funded under the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program (CSRD), was conducted at the request of OERI. The request was based on the assumption that the federal requirement that CSRD funded districts and schools carry out a comprehensive evaluation of their reform programs has created some concerns about the readiness and ability of local personnel to do so without additional support and assistance.

While evaluation technical assistance is sometimes available to schools and districts through consultants or written materials, it is more often the case that consultants are not readily accessible nor always appropriately grounded in K-12 education reform, and written evaluation materials are not available in a format and language useful to K-12 educators who may not have expertise in evaluation methods.

The initial focus of the study was to determine the need for an additional CSRD evaluation web site by

- examining the extent to which CSRD evaluation information is currently available electronically,
- determining the extent to which this information is accessed and used, and
- obtaining input from staff at other regional laboratories and OERI about the need and purpose of the proposed CSRD evaluation site.

EXISTING CSRD-RELATED WEB SITES

Aside from the model developer Web sites which feature individual models that might be used in local comprehensive school reform programs, McREL identified more than 20 sites supporting the federal CSRD initiative. These sites are listed and briefly described below.

Host	Site Description	Web Address
Comprehensive Regional Assistance Centers (CCs)		
Region III	Provides resources for selecting CSR-related publications and links to other CSR-related sites, including the National Clearinghouse for Comprehensive School Reform Site	ceee.gwu.edu/school_reform/csr.htm
Region IV	Offers an overview of CSRD-legislation and links to CSR model developers and other CSR-related sites	www.wcer.wisc.edu/ccvi/CSRDRoadmap/indix.html
Region VIII (Star Center)	Provides resources for implementing CSR models and designing "homegrown" models" as well as links to RELs, other Ccs, and CSR-related sites	www.rmcdenver.com/CSRD/CSRDHome.htm
Region IX (Southwest CC)	Provides CSR resources related to English language learners and links to CSR-related sites	www.cesdp.nmhu.edu/swcc/csrd.htm
Region X	Provides CSR-related resources and links, including a link to NWREL's "Evaluating Whole School Reform Efforts" publication	www.nwrac.org
Regional Educational Laboratory Web Sites		
Appalachian Educational Laboratory (AEL)	Provides links to CSR resources, such as model selection and readiness assessment guides, and to other CSR-related sites	www.ael.org/rel/csr/index.htm
Mid-Atlantic Laboratory for Student Success (LSS)	Contains an on-line database of state applications for CSRD funds and links to CSR-related resources, including LSS' own CSR program, other model developers and other REL resources	www.temple.edu/LSS/csr.htm

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Host	Site Description	Web Address
Regional Educational Laboratory Web Sites (cont'd)		
Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL)	Features McREL's CSR evaluation guide, also contains an annual publication describing each of the nine CSR elements, listing of CSR sites in the Central Region, and links to other CSRD-related sites.	www.mcrel.org/csrd
North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL)	Provides CSR-related resources, including NCREL's "Making Good Choices" implementation guide. Also links to other CSRD-related resources, including RAND reports, and model developer sites.	www.ncrel.org/csri
Pathways to School Improvement	Located on NCREL's server, contains resources and links to various aspects of CSR, including research-based curriculum programs, parent and community involvement, and integration/coordination of services.	www.ncrel.org/sdrs/pathwayg.htm
Northeast and Islands Laboratory at Brown University (LAB)	Provides an overview of CSRD and state CSRD activities in the Northeast. CSRD-implementation resources and links to other CSRD Web sites.	www.lab.brown.edu/public/csr/csr-index.shtml
Northwest Regional Education Laboratory (NWREL)	Contains state CSRD program information for the Northwest and links to CSR resources, including NWREL's catalog of school reform models, model selection tools, and NWREL's guide to CSR evaluation.	www.nwrel.org/csrp/index.html

Host	Site Description	Web Address
Pacific Resources for Research and Learning (PREL)	Provides an overview of CSRD and links to CSRD-related sites	w3.prel.hawaii.edu/programs.csrdp/csrd.html
Southeast Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL)	Includes a database of local CSRD-awarded sites, information on CSR models, research reports on school reform, and several REL-developed CSR resources (e.g., NCREL's planning and self-assessment tools and NWREL's catalog of reform models).	www.sedl.org/csrd
Southeastern Regional Vision for Education (SERVE)	Offers an overview of state CSRD activities in the Southeast and links to other CSRD-related sites.	www.serve.org/csrd
WestEd	Provides CSRD overview information, a CSRD newsletter, stories from CSRD sites, links to model developers, and CSRD-related resources, including NWREL's needs assessment tools, NCREL's "Pathways to School Improvement" and WestEd's CSR planning guide. Also provides a gateway to the CSRD Web.net interactive site, described below.	www.wested.org/csrd
CSRDWeb.net	A cross-laboratory effort, located on WestEd's server, contains profiles of CSRD-funded sites and links to CSRD information and resources. Also features moderated, interactive discussion groups, one of which focuses on evaluation and data collection	www.csrdweb.net

Host	Site Description	Web Address
Other Sites		
American Federation of Teachers	Provides an overview of the CSRD program resources for redesigning low-performing schools and links to CSRD-related sites	www.aft.org/edissues/csrd/overview.htm
Education Commission of the States (ECS)	Pages with ECS' "information clearinghouse" provide information on resource allocation, CSR model selection, as well as links to model developers and other CSR-related sites, including RELs	www.ecs.org
The National Clearinghouse for Comprehensive Reform (NCCSR)	Provides a searchable database of CSR-related resources including the CSR-related resources including the CSR-related newsletters, reports, and issue briefs. Also has links to CSR resources, information booths for parents, educators, and policymakers, and access to information specialists.	www.goodschools.gwu.edu
U.S. Department of Education	Contains an overview of the CSRD program, related legislation and funding, guidance for states, and CSR-related resources, such as NWREL's catalog of reform models, ED resources on schoolwide programs, AIR's "Guide to Schoolwide Reform," and NCREL's model-selection guide.	www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/compreform

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

While each of these organizational sites tend to feature their own efforts and products related to the CSRD initiative, they often reference other sites and materials developed outside their organizations. When it comes to evaluation information, however, the availability of guidance is less visible or consistent across sites. While some sites, like McREL and NWREL, post evaluation materials, in general, there seem to be few resources available to guide local CSRD evaluation activities. Two of these sites, NCCSR and CSRDweb.net, appear to provide a solid foundation for compiling on-line information and interactive discussion forums related to CSRD evaluation.

USE OF CSRD RELATED SITES

Dr. Zoe Barley, McREL's director of evaluation, serves as the moderator of CSRDWeb.NET's interactive forum on evaluation and data collection. In this role, she monitors the activity on the site and has found that the evaluation forum has yet to attract much use. In speaking with educators from CSRD-award sites in the region, McREL has found that people often say they are too busy to spend much time on the site, or the Internet in general. In other cases, they say they are not yet concerned with evaluation issues. If the present lack of activity on the evaluation forum on the CSRDweb.net site is any indication, it seems that if McREL were to create yet another online forum for CSRD evaluation information, it would likely not generate enough activity to warrant the resources devoted to its creation.

INPUT FROM STAFF AT OTHER REGIONAL LABORATORIES

During a recent meeting of regional laboratory program leaders, the group determined that creating a stand-alone CSRD evaluation web site would duplicate existing sites, some of which, as noted earlier, are not yet heavily trafficked. Thus, the group suggested it would a better use of resources to encourage laboratories and other organizations to add more links to evaluation tools and publications to their existing CSRD sites. It was also decided that with additional contributions from the RELs, the National Clearinghouse and CSRDweb.net sites could serve as even more effective tools for disseminating CSR-related evaluation information. Carol Chelemer of OERI was present for this discussion and concurred with the decision not to develop another CSRD site.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In summary, McREL has determined that a) there is an abundance of CSRD-related web sites currently on the Internet; b) most CSRD sites do not contain a wide array of evaluation resources; and c) existing sites, in particular, the CSRDWeb.NET site are not generating an inordinately high level of activity. In light of these findings, we offer the following recommendations.

RELs should encourage the use of the NCCSR and CSRDweb.net sites as evaluation resources. Given the large number of CSRD-related sites already on the Internet, it does not appear necessary to add yet another site. The NCCSR site already

serves as a "one-stop-shopping" resource for CSRD information and contains the beginnings of a collection of CSR evaluation tools. Thus, it makes sense for RELs to continue to support the site in this capacity. Meanwhile, the CSRDweb.net site already provides an interactive element which some educators might find helpful as they go about planning and conducting CSR evaluations. Again, it seems unnecessary to duplicate this feature in yet another site.

RELs should encourage existing sites to provide more links to the NCCSR and CSRDweb.net sites. In examining 19 CSRD Web sites (excluding the NCCSR and CSRDweb.net sites), it was found that only nine link to the NCCSR site and only three link to the CSRDweb.net site. Encouraging more links to these sites, especially from sites hosted by federally funded service providers, would most likely foster greater use of the materials placed on them.

Encourage existing sites to offer more resources on evaluation. It was also found that only three of the 19 sites examined (McREL, NWREL, and the Region X CC) currently provide CSR-related evaluation tools. Again, an effective, yet relatively simple way to encourage greater use of CSR evaluation resources would be to encourage more CSRD-related Web sites, especially those hosted by federally funded service providers, to offer links to existing resources, such as McREL's "Evaluating for Success" guidebook and NWREL /Region X's "Evaluating Whole-School Reform Efforts" guidebook, and to add new resources as they are created.